

Amendments to the Specification

Please insert the following as the first paragraph beneath the title on page one of the specification.

This application is the National Stage of Application No. PCT/EP2004/011124, filed on October 5, 2004, which claims benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/508,971, filed October 6, 2003. The contents of both are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

Please insert the following text as the Abstract:

Abstract

The MHC III region of chromosome 6p21.3 harbors a DNA sequence, most likely within the *TNF* or *LTA* gene, which influences response to pimecrolimus for the treatment of atopic dermatitis. Accordingly, genetic polymorphisms in the *TNF* and *LTA* genes are useful as biomarkers of the efficacy of pimecrolimus treatment of inflammatory disease. By contrast, response to tacrolimus appears to be influenced by other biological pathways.